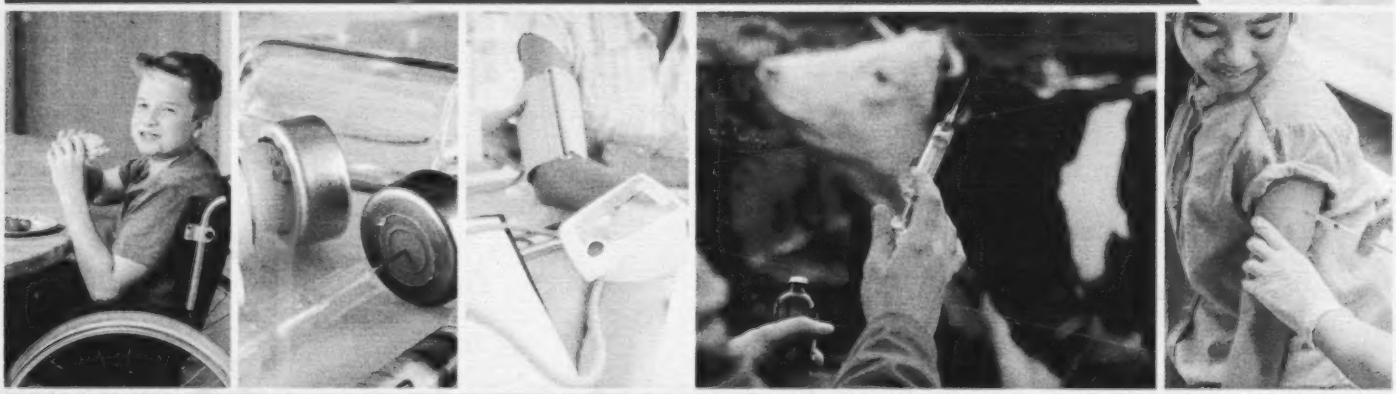
Health Canada | Santé Canada

*Your health and safety… our priority.* | *Votre santé et votre sécurité… notre priorité.*

# INNOVATE · INSPIRE · INFLUENCE



## HPFB STRATEGIC PLAN 2016–2021

Canada

**Health Canada is the federal department responsible for helping the people of Canada maintain and improve their health.** We assess the safety of drugs and many consumer products, help improve the safety of food, and provide information to Canadians to help them make healthy decisions. We provide health services to First Nations people and to Inuit communities. We work with the provinces to ensure our health care system serves the needs of Canadians.

Également disponible en français sous le titre :
Innover. Inspirer. Influencer.
Plan stratégique de la DGPSA 2016–2021

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# MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTERS

Developing a forward-looking strategic plan is a significant undertaking for any organization. We are pleased and excited by the level of engagement and hard work that went into building *Innovate·Inspire·Influence* from the ground up. We hope to carry that energy forward as we proceed with its broader implementation.

Our new strategic plan captures input from staff of all backgrounds and levels across the Health Products and Food Branch (HPFB). Since conducting environmental scans in summer 2015, we have reached out to you through surveys, focus groups and Directorate-level engagement activities. In total, approximately 700 staff—roughly one third of HPFB—provided individual input on the Branch vision and strategy for the next five years. Over 50 external stakeholder organizations with varying interests in the range of health products and food regulated by HPFB were also involved in discussions to develop our new plan.

This extensive engagement has shaped our vision for how we will grow and improve as a team. Our Strategic Plan is a culture-shaping initiative, aligned with broader Government of Canada priorities such as the *Speech from the Throne 2015* and *Blueprint 2020*. It takes stock of the ongoing changes in our environment and focuses our efforts on strategic priorities that will shape HPFB into a more flexible, open and collaborative organization that can better deliver on the Government's policy and program priorities for Canadians. *Innovate·Inspire·Influence* will guide us in taking more of a leadership role, both domestically and abroad, and make us more responsive in how we go about the business of regulating health products and food in Canada.

In establishing our vision and strategy for the next five years, we have endeavoured to incorporate all of the diverse strengths, experiences and aspirations of our team. As a result, we should all see ourselves in *Innovate·Inspire·Influence*, support each other in its implementation, and share a sense of satisfaction in its achievements.

***Anil Arora***
Assistant Deputy Minister
Health Products and Food Branch

***Pierre Sabourin***
Associate Assistant Deputy Minister
Health Products and Food Branch

# OUR CORE ROLE

HPFB reviews, regulates and approves the use of thousands of health products and foods vital to the health and well-being of Canadians. As a science-based regulator, we play a stewardship role that seeks to combine the best evidence with the most effective tools to protect and promote the health of all Canadians through access to safe, high quality health and food products and clear health information that is trusted in Canada and internationally.

# OUR VISION

Our vision is that *all Canadians achieve optimal health outcomes through access to safe, effective, high quality health products and food, and timely, relevant and useful health information.*

# OUR CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

In reviewing and regulating the health products and food marketed to Canadians, we operate in a constantly changing environment. For us to continue protecting and promoting positive health outcomes over the next five years, we will need to keep pace with these changes by investing in the skills, tools and processes we will need to perform our jobs effectively now and into the future. Specifically, some of the key strategic challenges we identified through our engagement process include:

## RAPIDLY EVOLVING TECHNOLOGY, SCIENCE AND BUSINESS PRACTICES

- Novel health products and food, new trends in medicine, fast-paced scientific discoveries and innovative business models are the new normal. This is challenging our conventional definitions of health products and food, and impacting the relevance and effectiveness of our legislative and regulatory frameworks.

## GLOBALIZATION OF MARKETS

- The production of health products and food is becoming more globalized each year. Supply chains are becoming more complex and many health products and foods follow a multi-step / multi-jurisdictional path before reaching the Canadian market.
- The globalization of markets is challenging our conventional oversight mechanisms, emphasizing the need for increased international regulatory cooperation and harmonization in order to maximise the efficiency of our processes and ensure Canadians continue to have timely access to safe, effective and high quality health products and food.

### PROLIFERATION OF ONLINE INFORMATION AND INCREASING PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS

- The volume of online scientific, technical and health-related information available to the public is increasing exponentially. Reliable sources of information are not always clearly identifiable.
- The public's reliance on and expectations for timely, relevant and useful health information is continuing to grow, challenging us to increase our online visibility, become a permanent source of trusted information and shape the public dialogue on health issues.

### ONGOING EFFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS

- Budgets have been constrained in recent years, and will continue to be for the foreseeable future, challenging us to find efficiencies and innovative ways of doing business.
- Streamlining processes and improving service standards remain priorities for stakeholders, including industry and patient groups.

## OUR STRENGTHS

Fortunately, HPFB is well prepared to take on the challenges and opportunities of our rapidly evolving environment. In fact, our team of more than 1700 professionals with various backgrounds and expertise has already been busy building our knowledge base and keeping abreast of advancing technology and emerging trends. Efforts to modernize our legislative and regulatory frameworks have been ongoing and will continue to advance in order to keep pace with innovation. We have also built strong relationships with our domestic partners and international counterparts in order to broaden regulatory cooperation and harmonize our processes. In line with Open Government, we have also been modernizing our online presence in order to increase our openness and transparency and further engage our stakeholders, including the Canadian public. We have been doing all of this while continually trying to find efficiencies and improve our service standards. None of this would be possible without the strong team that we have built. Each one of you has been affected by aspects of our changing environment and/or has worked on one or more of the initiatives mentioned above.

# OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY
Adopt a culture of openness and transparency
COLLABORATION
Take a leadership role in what we do best, at home and abroad
OUR ORGANIZATION AND PEOPLE
Invest in our people and processes
INNOVATION
Become a centre of excellence for outcome-oriented approaches

# OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY

Adopt a culture of openness and transparency

Over the next five years, we will build on progress achieved under our previous strategic plan by further embedding openness and transparency as our culture and way of doing business. Health and safety information, the rationale behind regulatory decisions, and key data will continue to expand in convenient formats and in a timely manner, making it easier for Canadians and stakeholders to navigate the health and food systems, helping stakeholders understand their roles and ours. This will also improve our ability to help shape the narrative on health-related issues. Stakeholders and the public will be engaged early when applicable, to encourage meaningful dialogue before decisions are made.

## COMMITMENTS

### TO BUILD ON AND IMPROVE HPFB'S OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY, WE WILL:

1) increase HPFB's influence and credibility by improving our ability to showcase our expertise and connect with Canadians through both conventional and social media;

2) improve Canadians' access to timely, useful and relevant health information in support of the principles of Open Government, while still respecting privacy, confidentiality and security considerations as part of the Regulatory Openness and Transparency Framework;

3) reinvigorate our digital presence to provide credible, user-centric information to help Canadians make informed choices about their health;

4) help our staff share information with confidence by providing clear guidelines on the protection of private and confidential information.

# COLLABORATION

Take a leadership role in what we do best, at home and abroad

Our operating environment is highly complex, cuts across jurisdictions, has players in a multitude of sectors, and has the potential to blur lines of responsibility and accountability for keeping Canadians safe and informed. Collaboration with partners at home and abroad helps to maximize outputs, modernise Canada's health product and food regulatory system, and ensure that Canadians have timely access to safe and effective products, as well as consistent and reliable information. We will build our reputation as a highly regarded regulatory leader and valued partner in targeted areas, as we focus on what we do best to fill gaps in research and innovation, and play a key role in regulatory harmonization and setting international standards and priorities.

## COMMITMENTS

### TO IMPROVE OUR INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC COLLABORATION, HPFB WILL:

1) dedicate resources to effective collaboration with key domestic partners (governments, patient/consumer groups, professional associations and industry) - helping HPFB provide national leadership while drawing on the specific strengths of different stakeholders;

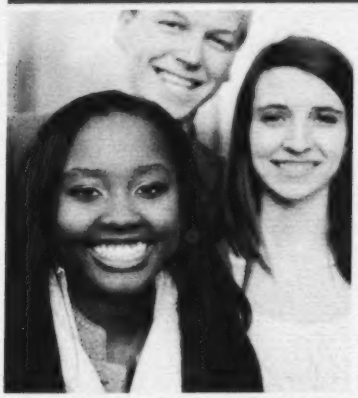
2) target engagements with our foreign counterparts to better align regulatory frameworks and show leadership in addressing shared challenges;

3) pursue greater harmonization of information management systems with both domestic and international partners to make sharing and analyzing information together easier;

4) use a risk-based approach to focus our time and resources on activities that provide the greatest benefit to Canada's health and food systems.

# OUR ORGANIZATION AND PEOPLE

Invest in our people and processes



Optimising our internal processes, leveraging risk-based decision-making models and focusing on our people will assist HPFB in improving our organizational agility; anticipating challenges; focussing financial and staff resources proactively; being efficient; reducing internal administrative burden; meeting our service standards; making the best decisions; and ensuring staff is highly engaged and motivated. This Strategic Priority will leverage and build upon the three pillars of *Employee Wellbeing, Talent Management and Learning and Development*. We will target our efforts so that our processes, IT systems, and training empower employees and create an agile workforce, ensuring that HPFB is an employer of choice for the best and brightest.

## COMMITMENTS

### TO SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONAL AND PEOPLE MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE, HPFB WILL:

1) foster a branch culture that encourages innovation, empowers employees to learn and be creative, and drives the ongoing evolution of our processes and tools;

2) enhance our efforts to recruit talented staff and select the best person for a given job within a reasonable timeframe;

3) budget sufficient time and resources for staff training, scientific and technical capacity building, knowledge transfer and networking so that we are prepared to take on future challenges;

4) improve decision-making and vertical and horizontal information sharing across HPFB and the broader Health Portfolio;

5) invest in reliable, effective tools and support systems, including IT and other critical infrastructure (e.g., laboratories).

# INNOVATION

Become a centre of excellence for outcome-oriented approaches

Consistent with the guiding principles of *Blueprint 2020*, we will seek out and leverage a variety of innovative, outcome-oriented tools (e.g., regulations, legislation, policy, guidance, partnerships, promotion, etc.) to impact behaviour and provide Canadians and stakeholders with the information they need. We will also continue to improve internal mechanisms to support innovative ideas and empower staff to grow new ideas with the potential to improve our performance. While regulation remains a primary approach to assisting in protecting and promoting the health of Canadians, we will consider innovative, non-regulatory or voluntary interventions wherever appropriate to fulfill our mandate.

## COMMITMENTS

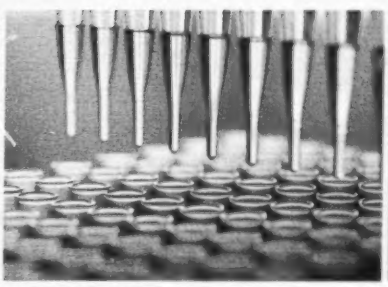
### TO BUILD THE BRANCH'S CAPACITY FOR INNOVATION, HPFB WILL:

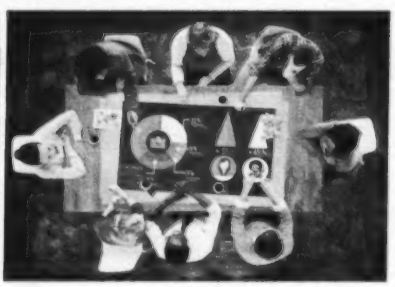
1) establish an "incubator" for new ideas and proposals, supported with dedicated resources and tools for project management, evaluation and lessons learned;

2) continue strengthening our regulatory framework to make it more responsive to changing health needs and more accessible to regulated parties;

3) strengthen our use of both new and conventional tools (e.g., public outreach, internet data mining) to better understand Canadians' health needs and position ourselves to respond as a regulator;

4) increase the agility of our review processes to ensure timely and safe access to market for products in the context of new and evolving health threats.





# REACHING FOR RESULTS

Over the next five years, through our commitments under the Strategic Priorities, HPFB will *Innovate·Inspire·Influence* by adapting our work culture and tools to achieve optimal results in our changing environment.

## OUR OBJECTIVE IS FOR HPFB TO:

- ☑ be a respected, credible source of scientific health information, providing timely and clear communication behind our positions on the wide range of decisions made daily to empower Canadians to make decisions themselves;
- ☑ lead health dialogues on the latest research and trends by investing in science capacity, empowering our experts, cultivating strong relationships and communicating our positions clearly;
- ☑ maximise safety and minimise regulatory burden, using a flexible, risk-based regulatory framework to focus resources strategically on what we do best and tap into our partners' expertise in other areas;
- ☑ embody a culture that values and promotes innovation internally and by stakeholders, supports and encourages staff to propose process improvements, empowers them to make decisions where appropriate, and provides the necessary tools and infrastructure (e.g. laboratories);
- ☑ support our staff in fulfilling its responsibilities with effective, modern and reliable information technology (IT) tools and support;
- ☑ harmonize our efforts with other domestic and international regulators, taking the lead in some areas and following the example of like-minded partners in others.

# BRINGING INNOVATE·INSPIRE·INFLUENCE TO LIFE

Just as HPFB staff has worked as a team to create *Innovate. Inspire. Influence*, so too must we work together to bring about its implementation. We must also collaborate with our partners, communicate our work and progress proactively, and build our credibility through science excellence as well as open and transparent decision-making.

With a focus on outcomes, we will address each strategic priority through a variety of projects and deliverables that will shift our Branch culture. We will work more transparently; solicit your input and involvement in operational decision-making; and support innovative ideas from conception to implementation. As a first step, work will begin on four major, long-term initiatives we are calling "Signature Projects", namely:

1) Branch Culture Strategy;
2) HPFB Innovation Centre;
3) Credibility and Connections;
4) Domestic Partnership Strategy.

More details on these and other initiatives to 'kick-start' and sustain the implementation of this plan are provided in the accompanying Implementation and Accountability Framework, 'INITIATE'. With your support, we will set the course for HPFB to be an organization that brings the best value to all Branch employees, Canadians and other stakeholders.